

C. It is submitted that no new matter has been introduced into the specification by the amendments, which amendments are based on the content of the specification before amendment and as filed; and it is submitted that the amendments do not improperly extend the scope of protection in any way, being essentially restrictive and limiting in nature.

D. For the above reasons the proposed amendments to the description and claims are submitted to be proper and allowable, and allowance thereof is earnestly solicited.

2. **Examiner's objection**

A. In the Written Opinion under reply, the Examiner in paragraph 7 under the heading "II. Ad Section V." points out that contrary to the requirements of Rule 5.1(a)(ii) PCT, the relevant background art is not mentioned in the description of the present application, nor are the cited documents identified in the description. Although the Examiner's aforementioned objection is well taken, the Applicant wishes to refrain at this stage from including into the specification a description or listing of the prior art, as this is not a requirement in all PCT member states. The Applicant intends dealing with the Examiner's objection in question on a country-by-country or region-by-region basis if and when national phase and/or regional phase applications are filed in due course.

3. **Invention Novel and Containing Inventive Step (Unobvious)**

A. **Invention Claimed in Claims Novel**

The Examiner, in the Written Opinion under reply, has found that all 11 claims of the present application as filed are directed to features which are considered to be new. Consequentially, the novelty of the present invention is not addressed.

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B. Invention Claimed in amended Claims has Inventive Step

(a) It is respectively submitted that, for the reasons set out below, D1 (DE 94 22 401 U1), D2 (EP-A-1 060 910) and D3 (US-A-5 301 445) are respectively directed at something quite different than the present invention, and D1 - D3 respectively essentially address different problems than that addressed by the present invention.

(b) D1 discloses a one-piece blank for a sleeve for a diskette or the like, and a binder fitted therewith. The invention of D1, contrary to the present invention, is aimed at providing a holder for a diskette or the like, which holder is intended to be received in a binder or secured to a book.

(c) D2 discloses a photographic jacket and album including a plurality of said jackets. In particular, D2 is, contrary to the present invention, concerned with providing a jacket which comprises at least one pocket for receiving a printed sheet and a transparent ink receptive layer for receiving a deposit of invisible ink that is an encodement of information that, preferably, relates to the printed sheets received in said pockets. The invention of D2 appears essentially to be aimed not at providing storage for printed sheets, but rather, it seems to be primarily concerned with permitting said encodement of information on the jacket. Further, it appears as if the pockets of the invention described in D2 are, contrary to the present invention, primarily intended to receive photographic prints.

(d) D3, in turn, discloses an album page for bi-directional insertion and centering of rectangular images. In particular, the invention described in D3 is concerned with positioning or centering of rectangular images on an album page. As is the case with D2, storage of images appears not to be the primary concern of the invention of D3, rather, as foreshadowed above, the invention of D3 is essentially concerned with centering of stored rectangular images. D3, contrary to the present invention, is thus, as far as storing of images is concerned limited to storing of rectangular images.

(e) Amended Claim 1 of the present invention is a file assembly for keeping personal records, the assembly including, in combination:

a plurality of sleeves, each sleeve having opposed operatively front and rear walls, the front wall being smaller than the rear wall, and the front wall having a periphery along part of which it is secured to the rear wall, such that the walls define between them a pocket, having a peripheral opening, for receipt of personal records;

a plurality of photograph display devices for displaying at least one photograph each; and

a binder within which the sleeves and the photograph display devices are received, the binder having a securing mechanism for releasably securing each sleeve and each photograph display device in place therein.

(f) The present invention as claimed in amended Claim 1, contrary to any of D1 – D3 or a combination thereof, provides a single assembly or unit for keeping personal records gathered or accumulated over an extended period of time, which personal records are not limited only to photographic images or diskettes. In fact each sleeve of the present invention provides a pocket for receiving personal records such as pictures, photographs, certificates, general or ceremonial documents, and other memorabilia (as mentioned in lines 13 -15 on page 5 of the specification on file). By virtue of the size and shape of the pocket of each sleeve, a wide range of differently sized and shaped personal records can be received in the pocket. In addition to receiving personal records, an operatively front face of the front wall of each sleeve, as described in lines 15 – 19 on page 7 of the specification on file, also provides mounting space for mounting, either adhesively or by means of mounting formations, of pictures or photographs thereon. When pictures or photographs are adhesively mounted on the front face of the front wall of a sleeve, the pictures or photographs, as will be appreciated, can, unlike the cited prior art, be arranged in any desired configuration or orientation, e.g. to form a collage, which thus allows for personal creativity of a user, and for display of a multiplicity of pictures or photographs. The front face of the front wall of each sleeve, as described in lines 19 – 21 on page 7 of the specification, also provides a designated writing space for receiving written information associated with personal records received in the pocket of the sleeve. In

addition, as described in lines 17 – 23 on page 12, lines 1 – 3 on page 13 and in claim 10 (both as filed and as amended), the operatively rear face of the rear wall of each sleeve is provided with writing space for receiving written information associated with personal records received in the pocket of the sleeve, on the one hand, or written information associated with pictures or photographs received by a neighboring display device, on the other hand. Adhesive securing of pictures or photographs to each sleeve and receipt by each sleeve of written information is permitted by virtue of the particular cardboard construction (lines 4 – 7 on page 7 of the specification on file) of each sleeve.

Further, each sleeve of the present assembly, as claimed in claim, is of cardboard construction, which as will be appreciated ensures durability, and areas of each sleeve surrounding the openings therein through which the clasps of the binder are received, are reinforced as claimed in claim 6, which further promotes said durability. The cardboard construction of each sleeve, as foreshadowed above, permits receipt in its sleeve of a variety of different records or articles, i.e. not only paper documents and photographs.

The present assembly as defined in amended claim 1, as mentioned, also includes a plurality photograph display devices for receiving and displaying one or more photographs respectively. Although D2 and D3 provide for storage or display of photographs, both these inventions, as outlined above, are essentially aimed at solving other problems, i.e. providing for encodement of information and centering of stored rectangular photographs respectively, than the present invention which, as will become more apparent hereunder, solely concerns itself with keeping together in a single file assembly, in an organized and chronological fashion, personal records accumulated over an extended period. As further described in lines 8 – 11 on page 12 of the specification on file, each display device, in one embodiment of the invention, can provide a single pocket, photographs or pictures to be displayed being mounted on an opaque sheet, which sheet is received in the pocket. It will be appreciated, that as described above with reference to the front face of the front wall of each sleeve, the pictures or photographs mounted on the opaque sheet can be

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arranged in any desired configuration or orientation, e.g. to form a collage, which thus not only allows for personal creativity of a user, but also permits each user to personalize his/her assembly. Naturally, certificates, diplomas, or the like which merit particular emphasis or visibility can, instead of the opaque sheet containing photographs or pictures, be received in said single pocket of a display device.

The present assembly as claimed in claim 1 (both as filed and as amended) further includes a binder within which each sleeve and each display device are received releasably received. In particular, the invention as claimed in claim 1 and as further described in lines 5 – 9 on page 13 of the specification, includes said plurality of sleeves and display devices, the display devices being interleaved between the sleeves. Thus, contrary to any of the cited prior art, or even a combination of the cited prior art, the present invention provides a single assembly or unit for receiving a multitude of differently natured personal records and photographs. As described in lines 14 – 16 on page 13 of the specification, the assembly of the present invention is particularly advantageously applicable for keeping personal records of scholars or pre-scholars, each sleeve and its associated display device, as described in lines 16 – 18 on page 13, being ideally suited for receiving personal records of a particular pre-school or school year. The present invention thus provides an assembly, which can be obtained as a unit, that enables keeping together, in an organized and chronological fashion, personal records accumulated over an extended time, such as for example an entire pre-school and school career, with records pertaining to different phases or periods of said career, for example each pre-school or school year, being kept separately from other phases or periods of said career. Naturally, when used to keep a personal history of a pre-school and/or school career, other documents and/or photographs not particularly relating to said career, can also be kept in the present assembly. To this end, the binder of the assembly, on account of its securing mechanism being in the form of clasps (see claim 5), permits insertion of other documents thereinto, by punching holes in said documents, such as for example art works or drawings, and securing them in the binder by means of the clasps.

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The present invention thus obviates the need to have separate storage facilities for keeping different types of personal records, such as for example photographs, on the one hand, and awards, certificates, art works, medals, and the like, on the other hand. This thus facilitates retrieval of and reference to personal records for a particular phase or period of a user's life. The present invention thus, whilst permitting creation of a tangible history of part of a user's life, promotes convenience in keeping of and consulting personal records constituting such history.

Yet further, the present assembly, as claimed in Claim 11, includes a protective holder in which the binder, and accordingly the sleeves and display devices secured thereto, is receivable, to protect the binder and its contents against wear. To this end, the holder, as described in lines 9 – 11 on page 6 is of relatively sturdy- or scuff-resistant construction. Further, with reference to lines 6 – 8 on page 10, the holder is covered with a protective water-repellent layer, to resist damage by liquids to the holder and its contents. As will be appreciated, the entire assembly, i.e. including the holder, can thus be neatly stowed away, more or less in the fashion of a book, when not used.

Essentially, the present invention, contrary to any one or a combination of the cited prior art inventions, thus provides a file assembly which permits keeping together, in an organized, chronological and personalized fashion, personal records of diverse nature accumulated over an extended period of time. On account the file assembly providing, as indicated above, a sleeve and display device for each phase or stage in a record keeping period, for example a particular school year, it further permits convenient filing and retrieval of or reference to kept records.

(g) For the reasons set out above, it is respectfully submitted that amended claim 1 of the present application and claims 2 - 11, by virtue of their dependency, directly or indirectly, on amended claim 1, embody the necessary inventive step. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that all of the amended claims 1 – 11, in addition to meeting the requirements of Article 33(2) as found by the Examiner, also meet the requirements of Article 33(3) and Rule 65 PCT, i.e. display inventiveness.

III. SUBMISSION

For the above reasons, the proposed amendments are respectfully submitted to be allowable and are submitted, in addition to being directed to a novel invention, to display an inventive step. Favourable re-consideration and allowance of the claims are thus earnestly solicited.

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AN ALBUM ASSEMBLY

5 **THIS INVENTION** relates to an album assembly. It more particularly relates to an album assembly for keeping personal records such as pictures, photographs, certificates, general or ceremonial documents, and the like.

In accordance with the invention there is provided a file assembly for
10 keeping personal records, the assembly including, in combination:

at least one a plurality of sleeves, each sleeve having opposed operatively front and rear walls, the front wall being smaller than the rear wall, and the front wall having a periphery along part of which it is secured to the rear wall, such that the walls define between them a pocket, having a peripheral opening, for receipt of personal records;

15 at least one a plurality of photograph display devices for displaying at least one photograph each; and

a binder within which the each sleeves and the each photograph display devices are received, the binder having a securing mechanism for releasably securing each sleeve and each photograph display device in place therein.

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The binder may include a planar rectangular front cover, a planar rectangular rear cover, and a spine interconnecting the front cover and the rear cover and about which spine the binder is foldable book-fashion, the securing mechanism

propagation of cracks or tears in the rear wall. Each sleeve may be of unitary construction, being formed from a single sheet of cardboard which is folded over on to itself to define the front wall and the rear wall, side edges of the front wall being folded towards each other to define flaps by means of which the side edges of the front wall are secured to the rear wall.

Each photograph display device may include a rectangular transparent photograph-receiving pocket for receiving photographs or for receiving a sheet on which photographs are mounted.

Each photograph display device and the rear wall of each sleeve may be essentially the same shape and size when seen face-on, each photograph display device and the rear wall of each sleeve being smaller in outline than the front cover and the rear cover of the binder, such that the front and the rear covers of the binder at free edges thereof overhang each sleeve and overhang each photograph display device received therebetween.

~~The assembly may include a plurality of sleeves and a plurality of~~ photograph display devices may be interleaved between the sleeves to alternate therewith, an operatively rear face of the rear wall of each sleeve providing writing space for receiving written information associated with records kept in the pocket of the sleeve. Naturally, if desired, an operatively front face of the front wall of each sleeve may also provide designated writing space for receiving written information associated

CLAIMS:

1. A file assembly (10, 100) for keeping personal records, the assembly (10, 100) being characterized in that it includes, in combination:

5 ~~at least one~~ a plurality of sleeves (12, 102), each sleeve having opposed operatively front and rear walls (22, 24), the front wall (22) being smaller than the rear wall (24), and the front wall (22) having a periphery along part of which it is secured to the rear wall (24), such that the walls (22, 24) define between them a pocket (38), having a peripheral opening (40), for receipt of personal records;

10 ~~at least one~~ a plurality of photograph display devices (14, 104) for displaying at least one photograph each; and

a binder (16) within which the each sleeves (12, 102) and the each photograph display devices (14, 104) are received, the binder (16) having a securing mechanism (17) for releasably securing each sleeve (12, 102) and each photograph display device
15 (14, 104) in place therein.

2. An assembly (10, 100) as claimed in Claim 1, characterized in that the binder (16) includes a planar rectangular front cover (64), a planar rectangular rear cover (66), and a spine (68) interconnecting the front cover (64) and the rear cover (66) and about which spine (68) the binder (16) is foldable book-fashion, the securing mechanism (17) being located between the covers (64, 66) of the binder, each sleeve (12, 102) and each photograph display device (14, 104) being secured between the covers (64, 66) of the binder (16).

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102) being smaller in outline than the front cover (64) and the rear cover (66) of the binder (16), such that the front and the rear covers (64, 66) of the binder (16) at free edges thereof overhang each sleeve (12, 102) and overhang each photograph display device (14, 104) received therebetween.

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10. An assembly (10, 100) as claimed in any of the preceding claims, characterized in that it ~~includes a plurality of sleeves (12, 102) and a plurality of~~ the photograph display devices (14, 104) are interleaved between the sleeves (12, 102) to alternate therewith, an operatively rear face (28) of the rear wall (24) of each sleeve
10 (12, 102) providing writing space for receiving written information associated with records kept in the pocket (38) of the sleeve (12, 102).

11. An assembly (10, 100) as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it includes a protective cover (20) within which the binder (16) is
15 received for protecting it, the cover being in the form of a box-shaped sheath.

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10 keeping personal records, the assembly including, in combination:

a plurality of sleeves, each sleeve having opposed operatively front and rear walls, the front wall being smaller than the rear wall, and the front wall having a periphery along part of which it is secured to the rear wall, such that the walls define between them a pocket, having a peripheral opening, for receipt of personal records;

15 a plurality of photograph display devices for displaying at least one photograph each; and

a binder within which the sleeves and the photograph display devices are received, the binder having a securing mechanism for releasably securing each sleeve and each photograph display device in place therein.

20

The binder may include a planar rectangular front cover, a planar rectangular rear cover, and a spine interconnecting the front cover and the rear cover and about which spine the binder is foldable book-fashion, the securing mechanism

propagation of cracks or tears in the rear wall. Each sleeve may be of unitary construction, being formed from a single sheet of cardboard which is folded over on to itself to define the front wall and the rear wall, side edges of the front wall being folded towards each other to define flaps by means of which the side edges of the front wall are secured to the rear wall.

Each photograph display device may include a rectangular transparent photograph-receiving pocket for receiving photographs or for receiving a sheet on which photographs are mounted.

Each photograph display device and the rear wall of each sleeve may be essentially the same shape and size when seen face-on, each photograph display device and the rear wall of each sleeve being smaller in outline than the front cover and the rear cover of the binder, such that the front and the rear covers of the binder at free edges thereof overhang each sleeve and overhang each photograph display device received therebetween.

The photograph display devices may be interleaved between the sleeves to alternate therewith, an operatively rear face of the rear wall of each sleeve providing writing for receiving written information associated with records kept in the pocket of the sleeve. Naturally, if desired, an operatively front face of the front wall of each sleeve may also provide designated writing space for receiving written information associated with personal